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# THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER

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## CONTROL OF GERMAN INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS

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Dr. Roman's article in the February number of the *Elementary School Teacher* is at hand. Dr. Roman's book *Die deutschen gewerblichen und kaufmännischen Fortbildungs- und Fachschulen* contains nothing that is not in accordance with the general positions taken in the reports and recommendations of the present writer.<sup>1</sup> The publication of this article changes the situation, and I should like to make a few comments on its statements.

The table on p. 270 of Dr. Roman's article is a translation of one found on p. 23 in Lexis' *Das technische Unterrichtswesen*. This book was printed in 1904, and is not up to date in its description of the industrial school systems of Germany. In fact, this table contains one or more small inaccuracies in its description of the situation at the time the book was written. Further confusion has been introduced by the fact that, while Dr. Roman seemed to be quoting the table literally, he has omitted one or two facts found in it, and seems to be unaware of a number of changes that have taken place since the book was written.

It ought to be remembered that the discussion of the facts found in this table does not touch the real question at issue in Illinois. The table deals with the higher supervision of the technical schools of Germany; the supervision that all parties in Illinois

<sup>1</sup> See especially *Vocational Education in Europe*, report to the Commercial Club of Chicago, Chicago, 1912.

agree to refer to an industrial commission or state board. Further, there has been no radical difference of opinion here as to the composition and authority of this state board or commission. The discussion of the question of higher supervision in Germany, therefore, casts no light on the controversy in Illinois. It is interesting, however, as a statement of fact and as expressing a frame of mind.

In Professor Lexis' table the schools of Baden are stated to be under the control of the Ministry of Education, although at the time the book was written they were under the Ministries of Justice and of Education, and were directly managed by a national industrial commission whose president was a representative of the Ministry of the Interior. In this commission were always to be found representatives of the industries. Since this book was written, these schools have been taken entirely away from the Ministry of Education and placed under the Ministry of the Interior. This change took place on April 28, 1905.

In Professor Lexis' table, p. 23, the statement is made that part of the schools—industrial continuation schools, building-trade schools, art-trade schools, and higher commercial schools—are under the Ministry of Education. The next item states that the technical schools for the textile industries and fine mechanics are under the Ministry of the Interior. Dr. Roman omits this latter statement from his table on p. 270. The actual higher supervision is exercised by an industrial upper school council whose presiding officer and actual head is the president of the Central Department of Commerce and Industry. This gentleman, Herr Mosthaf, is the man to whom you go if you wish information about the industrial schools of Württemberg. He is not a schoolmaster, but a trained man of business. Other representatives of the Department of Commerce and Industry, school men, and men of affairs in this school council are under him. Dr. Roman contents himself with the statement that these schools are under the Ministry of Education, and that the director of the schools is always a member of the council. That means, he says, that he practically controls these schools. As the director of these schools is almost invariably a member of these boards in all Germany, it would appear from Dr. Roman's reasoning that they controlled all such schools in

Germany. The facts are that great care is taken to prevent the undue influence of the school man by the organization of the boards or commissions having the schools in charge.

Dr. Roman's statements with reference to Bavaria are also likely to confuse the reader. He states, p. 270: "In Bavaria the director of the high school and the district school directors have direct charge of the industrial schools. This accounts for the fact that Dr. Kerschensteiner has been able to bring Munich to the front in the trade-school development." The facts are that in Bavaria, including Munich, the high schools (secondary schools) are not under the management of Dr. Kerschensteiner or Dr. Kerschensteiner's board. The building-trade school and art-trade school in that city are under still another board. Leaving out the schools of college grade in Munich, there are three distinct bodies of school officials exercising control over different systems of schools, Dr. Kerschensteiner having the elementary and continuation schools under his charge.

I frankly admit the excellence of Dr. Kerschensteiner's work in Munich and consider him a wonderful man. I believe, however, that he has succeeded in his work with the continuation schools, not on account of his connection with the general schools, but in spite of it.

It should be noted in the first place that he is separated from the control of the secondary schools. It should also be remembered that Dr. Kerschensteiner has been in a constant struggle with the school authorities of Munich for many years over these schools, and that he has succeeded largely on account of his co-operation with local trade and business organizations. Dr. Kerschensteiner was under investigation in 1910, and the question was openly discussed in the leading papers of Munich as to whether he would be forced into retirement on account of the opposition of the authorities. Munich is not a case proving the advantages of having the same authorities control the cultural and vocational schools; it is the exception which brings out the advantage of the other plan. A further reason for making this statement lies in the fact that Munich is the one place in Bavaria that has exceptional vocational continuation schools, Bavaria, as a whole being behind the other

countries of Germany. Dr. Roman himself, p. 62, calls attention to the fact that "Bavaria is still far back in the supplying of industrial schools for girls."

The question of higher supervision is not the one agitating the people of Illinois. We are divided on the question of local boards of control. In Germany the only place where these schools are under the ordinary local board of control is Bavaria, and there the secondary schools—academic and technical—are under separate boards. The local bodies controlling these schools in Prussia, Saxony, Württemberg, Bavaria, and Hesse are always different bodies from the ones controlling the cultural school of the community. A typical local board is the one in Karlsruhe, Baden, which is made up as follows: (1) the burgomeister, or mayor, as president; (2) another representative of the state council; (3) the director of the industrial schools; (4 and 5) two representatives of employers; (6 and 7) two representatives of employees. This typical school celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary in 1909.

Dr. Roman states that the administration of the schools of Prussia was taken out of the hands of the Ministry of Education and placed in the hands of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in 1885. He intimates, if he does not state, that Bismarck did this on account of difficulties over religious matters. The official statement, however, was that it was done owing to the complaints of some of the practical men of Prussia, representatives of the guilds, etc. The schoolmasters of Prussia have continued to believe ever since that they could run these schools better than they are now being run. No one else seems to think so, however. The upper house of the Prussian parliament recently voted unanimously against putting them into the hands of the Ministry of Education. At a recent conference of teachers of industrial schools where Director Haese (quoted with approval by Dr. Roman) was present, and I think the presiding officer, it was voted by an overwhelming majority to retain the present organization. One prominent speaker spoke with great emphasis of their obligation to Prince Bismarck for taking these schools out of the hands of the Ministry of Education in 1885. I found no one connected with the management of practical affairs who thought the present dual arrangement should be changed

The man of affairs everywhere believes that separation from the general type of school is necessary to success.

It is misleading to try to make it appear, as in Dr. Roman's article, that the question at issue in Germany is a religious one. We know that the Prussian continuation school does not teach religion and that the Munich and other South Germany schools do. At the present time the schools of Munich and other places of South Germany where they do teach religion appear to be superior to many of those in Prussia. My observations lead me to believe that the teaching of religion has little to do with the matter. Some of the best continuation schools I saw were in Prussia, and some of the poorest schools I saw were in South Germany, and yet as a whole I am inclined to think that the continuation schools of Baden are superior to those of any other country of Germany.

A further reason for my belief that the religious question does not "cut any figure" in this matter is the fact that in Switzerland, where there is complete separation of Church and State, the authorities appear to be equally insistent upon a separate board of control for each of the various types of schools. You will find different bodies controlling the industrial school, the commercial school, and the academic school. In Dr. Biefer's *Methodik*, a recent authority on vocational schools, the statement is made that this question of separation is absolutely fundamental. He urges that the boards be made up of practical men—employers and employees—and educators, with the practical men in control. In Austria, where all the schools teach religion, the industrial schools have been placed under the control of the Ministry of Public Works. Here again some of the schools are of a very superior order and some of them distinctly inferior to those of Prussia. I think it is misleading for Dr. Roman to inject the question of religious instruction into the question of success or lack of success of the various systems of management.

In the beginnings of the movement for vocational schools every community has to some extent made use of the general school buildings and equipment and the ordinary school faculty, but everywhere experience has shown the necessity of getting away

from the general buildings and faculties and control. In Munich the continuation schools have their own buildings and equipment, and they are making every effort to hasten the day when the full-time teachers will devote their entire energies to the vocational school, and when the day-school teachers will be retired from service in them. It is significant that in Munich, where the one board is said to control, the movement for separate buildings and separate faculties is as pronounced as it is in Württemberg and Baden where they have separate boards of control. Anyone who will deliberately put forward as a reason for leaving these schools in the hands of the ordinary board that they wish to avoid having separate buildings, equipment, and special practically trained teachers betrays a lack of knowledge of the movement and a very imperfect conception of the problem of providing vocational education for our boys and girls. No one who understands the question will try to use the fag-ends of our present school system, in buildings, equipment, or faculty, for the assistance of the fourteen- to eighteen-year old boys and girls who are in search of practical education. No one who knows boys and girls of fourteen will believe they ought to be compelled to rely upon the fag-end of their energies after doing a day's work in the shop, in their efforts to secure a practical education.

In Dr. Roman's article and others there is talk about "class division in society," and about the "undermining of democracy." Suppose we analyze this proposition a little. Under either form of administration the boys and girls are cared for in schools supported by public taxation, administered by school authorities selected in the same way. Under either system you will find them placed in separate rooms, in many cases in separate buildings, and, where efficient, under especially trained teachers. No one seriously proposes to put all of the boys between fourteen and eighteen together in one building; no one seriously supposes that democracy would require us to have the carpenter apprentice taught by the same teacher who prepares another boy for the University of Chicago. He ought to be taught, of course, by just as good a teacher. The difference seems to lie in the fact that the local board to whom the teachers and principal of the schools are responsible would be a

separate one, made up of practical men or women, with the superintendent of schools. It is hard to say how this organization could endanger democracy or bring about a "class division in society."

The real question before us is this: Under our present school organization, perhaps through no fault of the schools, there are, in a community like Chicago, in the neighborhood of 40,000 young people between fourteen and eighteen who are not in school. Of this number about one-half are employed in remunerative occupation. Society and the school have faced this situation in the past with considerable complacency, now and then offering these boys and girls a chance to get some vocational training in any evening school. The proposition is now made to care for all of these young people, employing the same general public agencies, and we are torn to pieces over "the attempt to overturn the American public-school system." I hardly think it worth while to discuss the criticism further.

The real reason for division of opinion is that many people believe these boys and girls would be made more efficient by placing them in schools directly responsible to a body of practical men and women, men and women with whom and for whom the boys or girls will work in their future life. We are simply anxious to secure individual efficiency, and through this, social efficiency and good citizenship; and we believe the proposed organization will be best adapted to secure this end. The attempt to inject the question of "class division" is far-fetched.

Referring again to German experience, I will say that I have visited about two hundred schools in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, and have never found any division of interest among the people on account of the separate system of management. I did not find any lack of co-operation in the common use of school property; in fact, I found this common use more general in Prussia where they have separate boards than I did in Munich where they have one. I found, too, that the continuation schools of Munich cost more than they do in any other place in Germany.

My investigation in Germany with my experience in America convinces me, as I have said, that "these schools should be separate, independent, compulsory day schools, supported by special taxes,



carried on usually in special buildings, administered by special boards of practical men and women, taught by specially trained practical men from the vocations, and securing the closest possible co-operation between the school and the factory, the school and the farm, the school and the counting-room, or the school and the home. Adaptation and co-operation are the watch-words for the new type of schools."

[This number of the *Elementary School Teacher* is devoted entirely to two topics: first, the general topic of industrial education; second, Mr. Curtis' tests. Both matters are so urgent that the editorial department is being omitted in order to bring out these papers before the summer months. The *Elementary School Teacher* does not in general enter into controversial matters and it has no judgment to offer with regard to the merits of the case under discussion by Mr. Cooley and Mr. Roman. The main point which impresses the editorial reader is the difficulty of disentangling the German situation from itself, to say nothing of applying it to the American schools. In earlier numbers of this Journal the present writer has expressed very definite opinions with regard to the desirability of separating American schools. The present discussion certainly does not modify in any wise the belief which he has reached on the basis of such evidence as has been submitted up to this time.—C. H. J.]